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2 March 1962

by Brig. Gen. Lansdale

THE CUBA PROJECT

The Goal: The United States will help the people of Cuba overthrow the Communist regime from within Cuba and institute a new government with which the United States can live in peace.

Developments:

30 November 1961: The above goal was set for the United States, with Brig. Gen. Lansdale as Chief of Operations and with operational lieutenants appointed as direct representatives of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director, Central Intelligence. The Special Group (NSC 5412) was to be kept informed and be available for advice and recommendation.

December-January. Decisive effort was made to re-orient the operational concepts within the U. S. government and to develop the hard intelligence and operational assets required for success. A joint effort was mounted to obtain intelligence in depth from refugees at Opa-Locka, Florida, and to provide more thorough access to operational assets. At the same time, reports from significant population groups, including religious and labor groups, indicated that the spirit of the Cuban people was dying under the Communist police-state controls and that some evidence on which to base hope for a better future was needed promptly to prevent this death of spirit. A review of operational assets dictated that the U.S. was powerless to hamper the sugar harvest, without U.S. attribution.

January 1962. The Chief of Operations assigned thirty-two Governmental and Agency units and Agencies, for a realistic assessment and evaluation of their capabilities.

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15 February 1962. Detailed staff papers were received from Departments and Agencies, responding to assigned tasks. A basic action plan was then made, for the step-by-step development of an internal revolution, by the Chief of Operations with joint consideration and approval by the operational representatives (CIA, State, Defense, and USIA).

20 February 1962. Completed basic plan for paced operations inside Cuba, and support plans for political, economic, psychological, military sabotage, and intelligence actions. The outlined concept would develop assets inside Cuba for a popular revolution in October (judged to be the earliest possible date by those responsible for operations), with U.S. and Latin American help from the outside. Each step would be taken as operationally feasible, collecting intelligence, building revolutionary assets, and taking advantage of targets of opportunity.

21 February 1962. Plan was discussed by Special Group (NSC 5412) and decision was made to meet again on it the following Monday, with Secretary McNamara.

26 February 1962. Special Group (NSC 5412) met with Secretary McNamara. Chief of Operations was asked to submit a plan for an initial intelligence collection program only.

1 March 1962. Special Group (NSC 5412) agreed that the immediate objective of the U.S. during March, April, and May will be the acquisition of intelligence, and that other U.S. actions must be inconspicuous and consistent with an overt policy of isolating Castro and of neutralizing his influence in the Western Hemisphere. At the end of May, the situation will be reviewed and a decision made as to the next phase. The Chief of Operations is to report to the President through the Special Group (NSC 5412 augmented by the Attorney General and the Chairman, JCS); the Special Group will be responsible for providing policy guidance for approving important operations, and for monitoring progress.

INTELLIGENCE PLAN

As requested by the Special Group (NSC 5412), a plan for basic intelligence collection, upon which to base the decision to undertake actions to cause the overthrow of Castro, is submitted herewith. In view

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of the new requirement for a comprehensive and definitive intelligence finding concerning the Cuban population vis-a-vis the regime, CIA requested that the initial period be extended through July 1962. This practical realism is reflected in the plan. Also, responsible CIA operational officers noted that at least 6 months should be added to the timing of phases set forth in the original basic action plan, if a decision to seek an internal revolution is deferred until the end of the collection and reporting period.

The attached plan reflects the Special Group's desire to collect definitive intelligence inside Cuba prior to a decision, while being consistent with giving the impression that the U.S. effort is to isolate Castro and to neutralize his influence in the Western Hemisphere. The plan gives maximal commitments of U.S. assets for intelligence collection in the periods shown.

DISTRIBUTION

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|-----------------|---|
| 1 | The Attorney General |
| 2 | General Taylor |
| 3 | The Secretary of State (through Deputy Undersecretary Johnson) |
| 4 | The Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense |
| 5 | The Chairman, JCS (through General Craig) |
| 6 | The Director, CIA (through Richard Helms, William Harvey) |
| 7-8 | The Chief of Operations |

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JUNE-JULY
(cont)

| <u>ACTIVITY</u> | <u>PURPOSE</u> | <u>CONSIDERATIONS</u> |
|--|--|--|
| 13. | | |
| 14. Survey airfields, military installations, and communication centers. | To provide current intelligence on key security resources of the regime. | This is conceived of as ground surveys, and the possible recruitment of military and other official personnel as intelligence agents. |
| 15. By the end of July, have operations to penetrate the regime. | To provide current intelligence on the actions and intentions of the regime. | This requires attempts to place trained agents inside government organizations, or to defect officials "in place." |
| 16. Comprehensive and definitive intelligence report on attitudes and abilities of the population inside Cuba. | To provide the Special Group (NSC 5412 augmented) with a hard estimate of the Cuban situation. | The intelligence estimate will provide a vital basis for a Special Group recommendation on whether or not the U.S. should undertake actions to make maximum use of Cuban resources as a justification for decisive U.S. military intervention. |
| 17. | | |

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MARCH
(1 - 31 March 1962)

ACTIVITY

INSIDE CUBA

1. Establish three intelligence agent operations in key areas selected by CIA.

PURPOSE

[REDACTED]

CONSIDERATIONS

There will be no assumption of risking visibility of this U. S. intelligence activity within Cuba. Selected personnel are being intensively trained. First team has 2 agents, second has 3, and third has 3 or possibly 4, for total of 8 or 9. Three areas in which resistance has been reported have been selected. Agent operations must stay alive, make useful contacts, and report securely to CIA. Physical risk to personnel is substantial, due to lack of intelligence. First reports from first team are expected by the end of March, while reports from the second and third teams are expected to start in April.

OUTSIDE CUBA

2. Caribbean Admission Center, Opa-Locka, Florida, fully activated by 15 March 1962.

To collect intelligence required for the operations, to identify and earmark intelligence assets as refugees arrive, and to provide security against Communist agent operations.

This operation, in response to early recommendation as essential by the Chief of Operations, is moving at utmost speed to become fully active by 15 March, with a new building completed and occupied, and with a staff of 42 at work. The staff is now being increased in phases, as quickly as personnel are trained, to supplement the initial staff of 9. (CIA responsibility, with support by Defense, Justice, State, USIA.)

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MARCH (cont)

ACTIVITY

3. Develop additional interrogation centers in other areas, during March 1962.

4. Expand special intelligence and other sensitive intelligence coverage, as required.

5. Develop intelligence potential of Cuban "colonies" in U.S.

- 6.

PURPOSE

To collect intelligence in a Latin atmosphere, at different levels than now seem possible in the continental U.S., to spot additional intelligence assets and to provide security against Communist agent operations.

To develop increased "hard" intelligence.

To exploit the intelligence possibilities of former residents of Cuba (including U.S. citizens) now in the United States.

CONSIDERATIONS

As Opa-Locka becomes fully activated, CIA will activate other interrogation centers as promptly as feasible.

Negotiations with local authorities are being undertaken to activate centers, if possible, in

[redacted] San Juan, Puerto Rico, and [redacted] are being surveyed for possible centers. (CIA responsibility with support by others as necessary.)

Use of cays near Cuba entail unacceptable security risks when vulnerable to Cuban landing parties. (Defense responsibility, in collaboration with CIA.)

There are "colonies" in Washington, D. C., and other U.S. cities which are "little Cubas." Family, Church, and business interests provoke unusual personal ties inside Cuba for some of these residents; a real potential exists for collection of intelligence not otherwise available. (Justice/FBI responsibility, with support from CIA and others as required.)

(Responsibility of Defense, with support by others as required.)

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~~APRIL-MAY~~
(1 April - 31 May 1962)

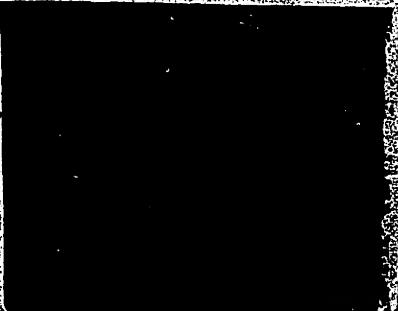
ACTIVITY

INSIDE CUBA

10. Up to 31 May, establish 5 to 12 more intelligence agent operations in areas selected by CIA.

OUTSIDE CUBA

11.



JUNE - JULY

(1 June - 31 July 1962)

INSIDE CUBA

12. Establish 10 to 15 more intelligence agent operations inside Cuba, in selected areas.

To have every area inside Cuba covered for intelligence purposes by 31 July, except the Isle of Pines (with no place to hide and with 70,000 troops).

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CONSIDERATIONS

Each agent operations team will vary in size from 2 to 5 agents, depending upon area selected and suitability of personnel to operate there successfully. The totals would be 10 to 25 agents. The March teams should be reporting in this phase.

Each intelligence "team" will vary from 1 to 5 agents, depending upon feasibility of terrain and capability of personnel. Some of these agents will undoubtedly replace casualties in earlier teams or reinforce teams where desirable.

This means a total of intelligence agents placed inside Cuba by 31 July of a minimum of 33 agents to a maximum of about 70 agents.

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MARCH (cont)

| <u>ACTIVITY</u> | <u>PURPOSE</u> | <u>CONSIDERATIONS</u> |
|---|---|--|
| 7. Periodic intelligence estimates, as required by progress of operations. | To up-date NIE 85-62, so that current estimates can be considered at national policy levels. | As the operations develop, there will be both increased intelligence collection and a need for as current an Intelligence Estimate as the U.S. can produce meaningfully. It is likely that a more informal method of producing an Intelligence Estimate for use at the national level (than now governing the issuance of NIE's) may have to be followed. (CIA responsibility, with support of others as required.) |
| 8. Continue political, economic, and psychological operations to isolate Castro and neutralize his influence in the Western Hemisphere. | To continue activities in consonance with U.S. policy established shortly after the April 1961 failure in Cuba. | These activities will have some negative impact on the Cuban people, who are part of the target, but are consistent with an overt policy of isolating Castro and neutralizing his influence in the Western Hemisphere. They are noted here, for the sake of completeness, but are separate actions, independent of this special operation, and are now being carried out by U.S. Departments and Agencies under other programs and projects. |
| 9. Provide logistic and personnel support. | To ensure optimum implementation of the intelligence plan. | The intelligence plan requires effective support by U.S. military, as necessary. (Defense responsibility.) |

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